

LIFE Meeting

Right to Life

January 8, 2014

1. Opening Prayer

Joe McCoy

2. Large Group intro PPT

Abby and Sarah

3. Small Groups

- Different Right to Life issues in each group
- Discuss and make a poster

4. Large Group

- Share Videos and Posters

5. Small Groups

- Go over all scenarios
- Debate the issues—cover both sides

6. Large Group

John

7. Closing Prayer

Wes

Opening Prayer

James Morrison

One Life

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmvllvY1dfU>

Scripture passage: Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them

One Life

When I was a young boy

I'd do whatever it takes

I was living for the moment

Coz this time's only borrowed

The world was wide open

I had every choice

I got one life, one life, one life

But with so many choices

And I'm gonna live it

I just didn't know what to do now

I got one life, one life, one life

All I say is just forget it

And I'm gonna live it right

If you tell me I'll regret it

Just let it be what it is

My daddy sat me down

Coz it's so easy to say

He said "Son, it's probably time to start making some plans"

Chorus:

If I knew yesterday what I know today

And I said "No, not right now"

Where would I be tomorrow

With so many choices

I won't let my soul slide away

I just didn't know what to do now

All I say is just forget it

If you tell me I'll regret it

Just let it be what it is

Coz it's so easy to say

Chorus:

You say the more you think
You know what's right
The less you do
What you feel inside
So I won't pretend that I always know
I just follow my heart wherever it goes
And I may not always get it right
But at least I'm living coz I've only got this...

One life, one life, one life
I've got this one life

Reflection:

We only have one life, one chance to live our lives the right way, but what about those whose life is taken from them? We are all made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore we all deserve life and should be given our right to life. God gave us our lives. It seems only right that God should be the only one to take our lives from us.

Chorus:

When I'm an old man
Hope I'll be rocking in my chair
Smiling to myself
I'll tell my baby girl
You only got one life
So make sure you live it right

Small Group

Scripture

Hold hands and interlock fingers so that all the weaknesses in the group are covered by each other's strengths.

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Reflection:

Though this passage is short it has a very deep message. God created us in His image and His likeness, therefore we need to represent that in the right way. He desired for us to represent Him in a way that glorifies all life. When we act in ways that condemn life and put at risk the lives of people who do not have to die we are not following His will for us. Today, Lord, help us to know that you created us and all those around us to live a full human life. Help us to see that and act upon it in the day to day things we do.

We pray in Your name. Amen

Different Small Groups

Capital Punishment

Definition of Capital Punishment according to dictionary.com

-Punishment by death for a crime.

Different types-<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/methods-execution>

History-<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9DtjJFQnmY>

Church view now and then

The Catechism and the Pope state that the state has the right to exact the death penalty. Nations have the right to just war and individuals have the right to self-defense. Does that mean that any and all uses of force to defend oneself against a criminal, or a criminal nation, are justified? No, and most people understand that.

To be good every moral act must satisfy three elements

- 1) The act itself must be good.
- 2) The intention of the one doing it must be good.
- 3) The circumstances must be appropriate.

1. Capital punishment is the right of the state. This is the principle taught by the Church. The Pope does not deny it, but neither St. Thomas or any Magisterial text presumes this gives the state an unlimited right to make capital laws and carry them out. It is inherent in a just capital punishment law that there be proportion between the taking of the life of the criminal and the benefit expected to the common good. A law, for example, that takes no account of factors such as repentance, mental age and so on is unjust. States have executed the mentally retarded, who could be of no conceivable future threat to society, and in one case a woman whose evident conversion even the state admitted. Thus, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:

2267 Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, the traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against an unjust aggressor.

Innocent and Condemned to Die: The Story of Greg Wilhoit

Greg Wilhoit spent five years of his life on death row for a crime that he did not commit. He received a full exoneration in 1993, but life is still a struggle for Greg.

On June 1, 1985, Greg's wife Kathy was brutally murdered in Tulsa, Oklahoma leaving Greg to raise two little girls 4 months and 14 months old. Almost a year later Greg was arrested and charged with Kathy's murder because two dental "experts", one of whom had been out of dental school less than a year, testified that a bite mark found on Kathy's body matched Greg's teeth.

Greg's parents hired an attorney who had a reputation as one of the top defense attorneys in Oklahoma to represent him. Unfortunately, in the preceding years the attorney had become an alcoholic and had developed alcohol-related brain damage. He embodied the definition of an incompetent attorney and did no preparation whatsoever for Greg's trial. He appeared in court drunk, threw up in the judge's chambers, and literally put on no defense. Greg was consequently found guilty and sentenced to death.

"At the sentencing," Wilhoit said, "the judge told me I was to die by lethal injection. Then he said, 'But if that fails, we'll kill you by electrocution. If the power goes out, we'll hang you. If the rope breaks, we'll take you out back and shoot you.'"

Greg was assigned an attorney, Mark Barrett, from the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System to handle his appeal. Barrett was convinced of Greg's innocence and worked

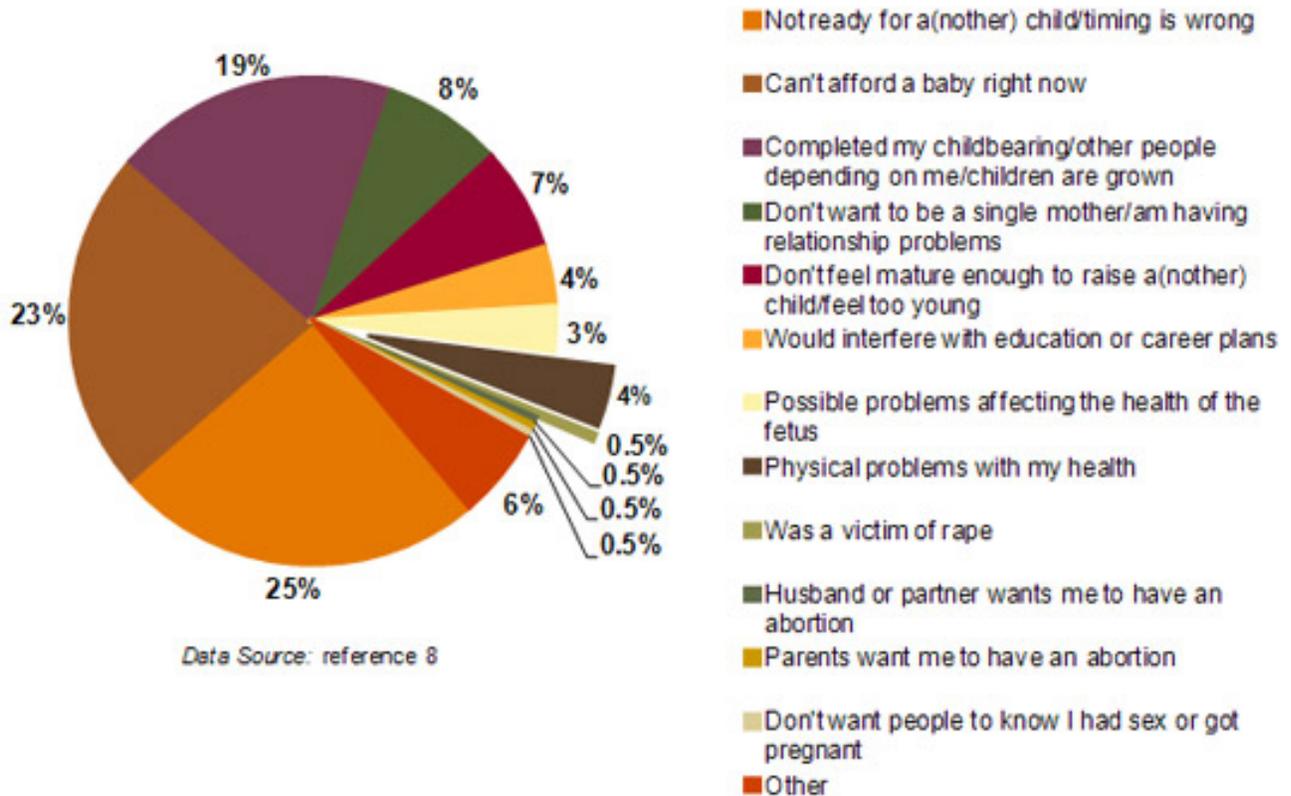
tirelessly for over 4 years to help correct a terrible wrong. The 12 top forensic odontologists in the country examined the bite mark evidence and all 12 testified that the bite mark could not possibly be Greg's. Greg was eventually granted a new trial and was out on bail for two years while the District Attorney decided whether or not to retry the case. A second trial was held in 1993, but after the prosecution presented their case (without the bite mark evidence) the judge issued a directed verdict of innocence and Greg was cleared of all charges.

Greg moved to Sacramento where he still lives today. He lost 8 years of his life, the opportunity to raise his two daughters, his livelihood, and his physical and mental health. He now lives off social security checks because he continues to suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He has never received an apology or one penny in compensation. In 2003, the Oklahoma Legislature voted overwhelmingly to award exonerated inmates \$200,000 for their time served in prison. However, Greg has yet to receive any compensation. Greg is trying to get on with his life, but it's not easy to get over the nightmarish trauma of those eight years.

Abortion

Why would you consider an abortion?

FIGURE 7. Percentage distribution of abortions, by reason given for having the abortion - United States, 2004



Data Source: reference 8

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_ccnoUYp1e9k/TAWtM0a6MfI/AAAAAAAAAdI/yR8sLlfARt8/s1600/reason_chart.jpg

Methods:

There are multiple different methods that depend on the stage of the pregnancy and the size of the unborn child.

<http://www.lifesitenews.com/abortiontypes/>

- 1-3 months
 - This is the point from a microscopic baby to at 3 months when the baby's eyelids have begun forming and hair appears, the child can suck her thumb, turn, somersault, jump, squints to close out light, frowns, swallows, and moves her tongue
 - Medical abortion, abortion without surgery, involves taking two pills while the baby is still very small. They are prescribed in the first trimester and are approved for use up to 7 weeks after a woman's last period. The first pill is taken orally, it blocks the hormone progesterone, causing the lining of the uterus to break down so it can't support the fertilized egg. The second pill is inserted into the vagina 48 hours after the first pill. It causes the womb to contract and shed its lining so the

egg detaches from the womb and is passed through the vagina. It includes heavy bleeding and period-like cramps. Other side effects include nausea, vomiting, dizziness, diarrhea, and headaches.

- Most common method of abortion is suction aspiration, during the first 3 months of pregnancy. The mother is given anaesthesia and her cervix is quickly dilated. The usual method is to insert a series of metallic curved instruments of increasing size into the cervix. In a normal birth this dilation happens slowly over many hours, but the forceful stretching here takes a matter of seconds. This unnatural stretching can permanently injure the mother. A hollow tube with a knife-edged tip is inserted into the womb. This is connected to a vacuum machine. The suction on this vacuum is 29 times more powerful than a household vacuum cleaner. It tears the fetus and placenta into small pieces which are sucked through the tube into a bottle and discarded.
- Dilation and curettage is similar, except a hook shaped knife is inserted and cuts the baby to pieces which are scraped out through the cervix
- 4-6 months and on
 - During this period blood begins circulating to all body parts of the baby, tissue and organs are forming, eyebrows, eyelashes, and fine hair appear, muscles lengthen and the mother begins feeling the baby moving and kicking inside, and the baby can now grasp with his hands. Taste buds and vocal chords are complete and the child can sometimes silently cry, the brain is fully formed, and the child can feel pain at just 3 months. At 5 months the child can hear and recognize her mother's voice and the doctor can now tell if the baby is a girl or boy
 - After 4 months the saline injection method can be used when enough fluid has accumulated. A long needle injects a strong salt solution through the mother's abdomen into the baby's sac. The baby swallows the fluid and is poisoned by it. It burns off the outer layer of skin. It normally takes over an hour for the baby to die from this. Within 24 hours labor sets in and the mother gives birth to a dead or dying baby. There are many cases of these babies being born alive, and they are usually left unattended to die. Few have survived.
 - The dilation and evacuation method is used after 6 months. A pair of forceps are inserted into the womb to grasp parts of the fetus. The teeth of the forceps twist and tear the bones of the unborn child. This process is repeated until the baby is dismembered and removed. Usually the spine must be snapped and the skull crushed.
- How long abortions can be performed depend on where you live. The cutoff date for legal abortions is typically 5 months, but if it is determined that the mother's health could be compromised by the birth of their child this can be extended. This even includes the mental health of a mother, if she's can't handle another child. Abortions can legally be performed this way up until a full-term child.

- Prostaglandin chemical abortions are one of these kinds. This uses chemicals which cause the uterus to contract intensely, pushing out the developing baby. They are more violent than natural contractions, so the unborn baby is frequently killed by them. Some have even been decapitated by them. But, many have been born alive. These babies are either placed to the side or killed by the abortionist or nurse
- Hysterotomy or caesarean sections are used mainly in the last 3 months of pregnancy. The womb is entered by surgery through the abdomen. It goes like a normal C-section delivery, except the umbilical cord is usually cut while the baby is still in the womb, cutting off her oxygen supply and causing her to suffocate. Sometimes the baby is removed alive and left in a corner to die of neglect.
- A partial-birth abortion can be used all the way up to a full-term baby. The abortionist grabs the baby's legs with forceps and pulls the legs out into the birth canal. The baby's entire body is delivered except for the head. The abortionist jams scissors into the baby's skull, and then opened to enlarge the skull. The scissors are removed and a suction catheter is inserted. The child's brains are sucked out, causing the skull to collapse. The dead baby is then removed.

Pro-Life vs. Pro-Choice

<http://civilliberty.about.com/od/abortion/tp/Pro-Life-vs-Pro-Choice.htm>

***Pro-life** argues that even undeveloped human life is sacred and must be protected by the government. Abortion must be illegal and must not be practiced.

***Pro-choice** argues that the government doesn't have the right to invade a woman's right to decide whether or not to continue a pregnancy

***Religious aspect:**

An immortal soul is implanted at the moment of conception, so there is little difference between terminating a week-old pregnancy or killing a living, breathing person.

But, politics can't incorporate a religious view into lawmaking. It's impossible to distinguish what is labeled as "human life" and please all people.

***Wrap-Up:** Although there may be many arguments for pro-choice, the church still follows the teachings of Jesus and what the Pro-Life movement stands for.

Church Teaching

- The Catholic Church Condemns abortion as grave evil. It is basically considered murder because the catholic church considers life to start at the moment of conception (FROM WOMB TO TOMB)
- It violates the 5th Commandment, YOU SHALL NOT KILL

- The church teaches that everyone has 7 rights.
 - Life, Food, shelter, clothing, education, healthcare and employment.
- The most important right is the right to life because it is impossible to have those other rights if you are not alive.
- "*Human life is sacred* because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being."
- (Domun Vitae--. The respect for Human Life, a letter written to the people of the church by the congregation of the Catholic Faith in the Vatican)
- Pope John Paul II was very strong with the Church Teaching on Abortion.
 - He wrote 'The Gospel of Life' which was a letter explaining the Church views on protecting human life.

Injustices of War

The Church's Teaching - In broad terms, Christians must not love violence. They must promote peace whenever possible and be slow to resort to the use of arms. But they must not be afraid to do so when it is called for. Evil must not be allowed to remain unchecked.

What is a "just war"? (From: Catechism of the Catholic Church)

1. The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;
 - One cannot go to war simply to expand one's sphere of influence, conquer new territory, subjugate peoples, or obtain wealth. One only can go to war to counter aggression.
2. All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
 - Are there diplomatic ways to prevent conflict?
3. There must be serious prospects of success;
 - Is there be a substantial possibility of success.
4. The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition.
 - Is it possible to stop the aggressor without weapons of mass destruction with less deaths.
 - Protect civilians

John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have opposed the War in Iraq

- He thought that more diplomatic efforts could have been made to stop the war.

When is it right to kill someone during war?

- Church's Response - "Those who devote themselves to the military service of their country should regard themselves as the agents of security and freedom of peoples. As long as they fulfill this role properly. They are making a genuine contribution to the establishment of peace."
- If you are fighting for peace then it is ok to kill during war. Of course that doesn't count killing innocent people in warring states.

Injustice with Civilians and POWs:

- Church teaches that civilians and prisoners of war in during war should be respected and treated humanely

Examples: Vietnam. Burning of villages. Murdering and raping whole villages.

Bataan Death March during WWII. In the Philippines where the Japanese army made over 60,000 Filipino and American soldiers march over 80 miles to a different camp. Around 80,000 troops died on the march.

Video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5tygCaY9a0>

Second Small Group

In the Second Small Group

- You will cover every issue by discussing the scenarios for each topic
- Present both sides of the issues
- Have people pick a side
- Debate on issues
- Closing Prayer

Scenarios

Capital Punishment

1. There is a man that has been killing people for years and accumulated about 20 murders. The state where the man lives in has the death penalty. The Judge ends up sentencing the man to death by lethal injection.
 - Does the man deserve to be put to death?
 - What other options could the judge have used?
2. Your older brother is on death row. He murdered a stranger. He is to be sentenced to death the next morning. He still believes that he is innocent and is sticking to his word.
 - How would you feel about this?
 - What if he told you in secrecy that he had actually killed someone?
 - Does he deserve to die now?
3. Your 5th grade sister is killed in a school shooting. The man who committed the killings is sentenced to death.
 - How would you feel?
 - Do they deserve to die?

Abortion

1. A 16 year old girl discovers she's pregnant. She never imagined spending the rest of her life with the father and is terrified to tell her parents. She's got no money to raise a child and wants to finish school. Abortion seems like an easy way out, but she's hesitant about it all. How should she deal with this situation?
2. A young woman is raped and later finds out she is pregnant. Should she keep the baby? What would you do if you were her parents?
3. A mother has been told that her baby has severe birth defects and may never live a normal life. Should she keep the baby?
4. A young mother realizes she's pregnant but she also is diagnosed with cancer. The fetus won't live through chemotherapy. Do you go forward with the chemotherapy or not have it to carry the baby?
5. A mother learns that she is pregnant while on birth control. She has an STD that could possibly be spread to her child. There is no way to be sure that you can prevent the STD from spreading. What should she do?

Scenario Activity

1. There is a preacher and wife who are very, very poor. They already have 14 kids. Now she finds out she is pregnant with her 15th. They are living in tremendous poverty. Considering their poverty and the excessive world population, would you consider recommending abortion?
2. The father is sick with sniffles, the mother has TB. They have 4 children. The first is blind, the second is dead. The third is deaf and the fourth has TB. The mother finds she is pregnant again. Given the extreme situation, would you recommend abortion?
3. A man raped a 13 year old black girl and she got pregnant. If you were her parents, would you consider recommending abortion?
4. A teenage girl is pregnant. She is not married. Her fiancée is not the father of the baby, and he is very upset. Would you recommend an abortion?

If you have answered "yes" to any of these situations:

In the **first case** you would have killed John Wesley, one of the great evangelists of the 19th century.

In the **second case**, you would have killed Beethoven.

In the **third case** you would have killed Ethel Waters, the great black gospel singer.

In the **fourth case** you would have recommended the murder of Jesus Christ.

With U. S. abortion deaths topping 30 million, only God knows what we have sacrificed in lost human talent and creativity.

Injustices of War

Pacifist- believe that there should be no war at all. All problems should be solved through diplomatic reasoning

Warmonger (Fancy Term for War Lover)- strongly supports war. Quickly starts wars without much thought.

The inbetween- Supports war only if it is for a good cause and is a last resort.

1. You are an American Soldier staked outside of a town in Afghanistan where a top Taliban leader is. The plan is to capture the Taliban leader. If your cover is blown the Taliban will kill you. The night before the attack a boy from the village discovers your team. They are faced a serious problem. If they let the boy go he will tell the whole village and blow their cover. But who would kill an innocent child. What would you do?
2. You are an American soldier in Afghanistan. You and your platoon have just peacefully searched a village for any Taliban members and have found none. On your way out your sergeant laughingly suggests that you torch the village. You knowing that the village have done nothing wrong and are all innocent people. Do you risk your life and stand up to your leader and tell him he is wrong and save all the lives in the village? or Do you go along with it knowing in your heart that it is wrong to kill the innocent people?
3. You are an American soldier in Germany during World War II and you have captured some German spies. They refuse to talk, so your captain has told you that you have two options: to torture them until they talk or kill them. What do you do?

Euthanasia

1. Your mom is in the hospital due to cancer and you know she's in pain. You want to keep your mother alive because she's your mother, but it's hard to watch her go through the pain. She is okay with whatever you choose.
2. (Involuntary) Grandpa Carl is 80 years old with Alzheimer and develops cancer. The cancer is terminal, but chemotherapy could extend his life and maybe cure him. At the same time, though, it would subject him to all the discomforts of such treatment. His family determines to instead give him a hormone therapy -- it does not extend his life to the extent chemo would, but it makes this last chapter of his life comfortable. Grandpa Carl does not understand the nature of the treatments.
3. Angela can only be fed through a tube. Her will states that she does not want to be kept alive artificially, so her family allows the doctors to remove the tube.
4. Rachel has been admitted to the hospital for lung cancer. She is 70 years old and has no family. The doctors determine that it is better to euthanize her and end her suffering so they can use their resources on more viable patients. They give her a lethal injection.

Closing Prayer for Small Group

Dear Lord,

We live in a place where the right to life is not always the first priority in the minds of some people. When the topics of Abortion, Capital Punishment, Euthanasia, and War come up some people become uneasy and are unsure of where their opinion lies. Help us to give strength to those who feel unsure and help them realize that everyone has the right to their own life. We pray in Your name. Amen

Large Group

1. Has your view changed or been reaffirmed on any of the topics? For which ones and why?
2. Do you seem to side more with the Catholic Church teachings or the opposing side?
3. Did the people in your group have a similar opinion as you?
4. Was it is easy to accept the other people's opinions?

Closing Prayer

Arms of an Angel
Sarah McLaughlin

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZDsYurqQBU>

Spend all your time waiting
for that second chance
for a break that would make it okay
there's always some reason
to feel not good enough
and it's hard at the end of the day
I need some distraction
oh beautiful release
memories seep from my veins
let me be empty
and weightless and maybe
I'll find some peace tonight

in the arms of the angel
fly away from here
from this dark cold hotel room
and the endlessness that you fear
you are pulled from the wreckage
of your silent reverie
you're in the arms of the angel
may you find some comfort here

so tired of the straight line

and everywhere you turn
there's vultures and thieves at your back
and the storm keeps on twisting
you keep on building the lies
that you make up for all that you lack
it don't make no difference
escaping one last time
it's easier to believe in this sweet
madness oh
this glorious sadness that brings me to
my knees

in the arms of the angel
fly away from here
from this dark cold hotel room
and the endlessness that you fear
you are pulled from the wreckage
of your silent reverie
you're in the arms of the angel
may you find some comfort here
you're in the arms of the angel
may you find some comfort here

I picked this song to remind you there's no life is worth taking no matter if it's because they killed someone or just because you don't want a baby right now. There are better ways to handle these things. For a killer you can keep him locked up and get him the help he needs. And for a baby you can simply give them up for adoption in instead of sending that baby right back up to God and not giving him a chance to live. There is always an option it just depends on you to be the bigger person and make a better decision.